E-Portfolios

What is an E-Portfolio?

An e-portfolio is an online showcase for your work, accomplishments, and interests. There are many e-portfolio services on the Internet, but for the purposes of SO 401: Sociology Senior Seminar, we are recommending you use the WordPress.com platform.* Wordpress is the most popular blogging platform on the Internet, and can also be used for making e-portfolios.

Why Should I Make an E-Portfolio?

E-portfolios are surprisingly versatile, and can be used for the following purposes:

- **Academic** - Allows you to inquire about, reflect upon, and integrate your work into a cohesive whole.
- **“Hire Me!”** - Focuses on getting you a job.
- **Reputation** - Designed to build your online reputation (especially for professional purposes).
- **Networking** - Fosters relationships and develops contacts.

How is an E-Portfolio Different From a Résumé?

There are some key differences:

- **Aesthetics** - Your résumé should fit on a piece of paper and must conform to a variety of [pretty bland] design standards; your e-portfolio should be vibrant, expressive, graphical, and design-conscious.

- **Content** - Your résumé should stick to professionally relevant items; your e-portfolio is a more rounded, fulsome document, and should speak to more than just your professional life.

- **Evolving** - Some people say you should update your résumé everyday, but since you’re not insane, you probably don’t do that; your e-portfolio really is a living document, and should be updated frequently.

- **Stories** - Your résumé tells one story -- a professional one; your e-portfolio can support many narratives, including humanitarian, artistic, charitable, and philanthropic endeavors.

*Note:

There are actually two versions of WordPress -- [WordPress.com](http://WordPress.com) is a more streamlined, simplified version of Wordpress, while [WordPress.org](http://WordPress.org) is a more complex, intricate version of Wordpress. If you want a detailed comparison between the two services, see ([http://goo.gl/R8uuHO](http://goo.gl/R8uuHO)).
What Shouldn’t I Have in my E-Portfolio?

Though the e-portfolio is a form of social media, it’s a more “conservative” form of social media than, say, Facebook or Twitter. Unless you’re prepared to be judged on the following, try to avoid:

- Personal disclosures about religion, political affiliation(s), sexual orientation, or disabilities.
- The inclusion of photos or (descriptions of) activities which might portray you in a poor light.
- Experiences and/or work samples which detract from the image you’re presenting.
- Spelling, grammatical, or factual errors!

Five Common Mistakes Designers Make in Their Portfolios

Here are 5 pitfalls to watch out for when designing your e-portfolio:

- **Obfuscation** - Clarity and focus should permeate your e-portfolio.
- **Information Cramming** - The tighter you pack your portfolio, the more cluttered it will appear; be conscious of how many clicks it will take for a user to get to their desired information.
- **Overdoing It** - Keep things simple and organized; the more you try to do in your portfolio, the more chances things can go awry.
- **Uncommon Navigation** - If people have difficulty navigating through your portfolio, then it will fail to meet its goals. Consider a visual hierarchy as a way to lead your audience through the pages.
- **Visual Clutter** - If decorative elements fit your goals and compliment your work, that’s great. If not, remove them. White space also helps to give a professional feel to your portfolio. The more visual elements you try to push into an area, the more difficult it is to maintain a professional look.

My WordPress Information

WordPress Site Address: _________________________________________________________________

WordPress Dashboard Address: ____________________________________________________________

WordPress Email/Username: ______________________________________________________________

Wordpress Password: ____________________________________________________________________